

The Messenger

Rev J C Bucher L M M

"As the Truth is in Jesus."

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TERMS.

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Poetry.

A NEW YEAR'S WATCHWORD.

"Come, Lord Jesus."

"Come, Lord Jesus!" oh! I want Thee to be present with me here, As alone I could not venture on the changes of this year;

For I know not what may happen ere I reach its closing hour:

Oh be with me, blessed Saviour, and sustain me by Thy power!

Come, Lord Jesus, every morning—May my spirit feel Thee near,

Ere I enter on Thy service; in my daily household sphere

Make me loving, gentle, patient; whatever the work may be,

May each duty tell forth plainly that Thy child has been with Thee.

Come, Lord Jesus; for those duties are too much for one to bear;

Then, if Thou art close beside me, I with Thee their weight can share;

And if sorrow e'er approaches, with her sable wing of night,

Then come closer still, my Saviour, and enfold me in Thy light.

And if Joy should sometimes cheer me, with her bright and happy face,

Then be present still, Lord Jesus, with Thy never-failing grace;

Keep me humble in her sunshine; may my joy with Thee be shared,

That I be not, through presumption, with her loveliness ensnared.

But if yet a third should seek me, with a message from Thy throne,

Even Death himself, then, Saviour! let him not appear alone,

But oh! come Thyself, Lord Jesus; for I should not dare to go

With a stranger through that valley, which is very dark, I know.

Come, Lord Jesus, oh come quickly! for the year has opened now,

And be present at this moment, as in prayer I humbly bow;

And if Thou should'st come, blest Saviour, in the gladdest sense of all,

May I then arise to meet Thee, as I hear Thy trumpet call.

CHARLOTTE MURRAY

Communications.

For the Messenger.

REDEEMING THE TIME.

A new year of time is for the natural man the opening of another year of bondage to error and sin. As of the human heart, so of man's day, and weeks, and months, the world has taken possession; and holds possession with an iron grasp. All the cycles of time, like galley-slaves, are under the whip and lash of the world. There is no exception, and no interruption. The hours as they come and go in the life of the natural man are, each one and all, to be given to the service of things seen and temporal.

True, a man of the world, like a Christian, may redeem his time; but he does not redeem it from the evil days. He may indeed sell an evil day, but not for a day truly good. One evil day he may give as the price for another evil day; one year of evil for another year of evil. He redeems time to make money by surrendering the pleasures of ease and indulgence. Or he obtains time to gain riches by selling his conscience. Another may pay money and the pleasures of sense for the honor of political distinction or worldly renown.

The world keeps no ledger and enters no credits. He who would redeem his time for riches will find that the world exacts payment in advance, whilst the world gives no security. It holds out the promise of gold, but ten to one the promise is only for the eye. The promise glitters like gold, but when touched it is a bubble. The price is paid, paid in advance, but the promise is a delusion.

Men speak of taking time by the forelock, that they may be masters of the situation. But they miss their hold, and fall helpless to the ground. Rampant, ruthless, mighty Time tramples them under foot. Instead of mastering the situation, the situation has mastered them. The evil days increase in evil, as the new years increase in number. For this world has no sympathy with its willing captives, who begin and end year after year in obedience to its cruel will.

For the living Christian a new year of time, is the opening of another year of spiritual conflict and spiritual freedom. Redeemed from the kingdom of darkness by Jesus Christ, his days and months are released from bondage to error and sin. Like his person so is his time, free. His hours as they come and go, are like himself, each one and all, the servants of Him who is the conqueror of the evil powers of this fallen world. They are consecrated to things spiritual, unseen and eternal.

But this world does not surrender easily. It claims the passing hour of the Christian; and presses its claim with siren voice. Time for the service of Christ and of His kingdom is gotten only by paying for it. The price is high, even exorbitant, as some men think; but those who enjoy the rich blessings conferred by Christ on those who take upon themselves His yoke, however great the cost may seem to be at first, find out by and by that the price is very low. The Christian does not surrender an evil day in the flesh for another evil day in the spirit. When he sees the evil in the days of this world, and by the power of faith renounces the evil with a firm and steady will, time brings to him spiritual peace and spiritual triumph with every passing moment.

When the believer by sacrificing the pleasures of sense and of sin, redeems the fitting moments for the kingdom of Christ, he is not inveigled by an empty glittering promise. The reward does not lie in the dim, uncertain future. Nor does a man pay the price for spiritual good before he gets the reward. Christ does not exact self-denying service merely in order that His people may be fitted to receive His rich gifts. But He bestows His gifts before He requires the service. He gives the power to obey His will. The price we must pay to redeem our time from the sinful spirit of this world, He puts in our hand. We redeem the days and hours for His service by virtue of the rich grace which by the Spirit we receive from Him. He rewards our fidelity in the very moment of obedience to His will; and the reward becomes greater and richer as from day to day the service is purer and holier.

Time does not conquer the living Christian. When he takes time by the forelock, he does not miss his hold. Christ is master as of all things seen, so of all the years. His people share the mastery of His own conquest. Time has the men of this world, but not the true Christian, under his heel. The days and hours are Christ's well trained servants. As the years come and go, they are held in subjection by the mighty power of His grace, and must work together in promoting the discipline and strengthening the vigor of His people. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

E. V. G.

For The Messenger.

A GLIMPSE OF DUBLIN.

We had spent several delightful days at the Lakes of Killarney, and were now ready to proceed on our journey. The ride to Dublin was rather uninteresting, passing through a level country, with many bogs where men were engaged in cutting turf for fuel. The distance is said to be 186 miles, but it must be remembered that the miles of Ireland are longer than those of other countries. "St. Patrick measured them in his coach," you know.

We had stopped at Mallow on our way to Killarney, and had no desire of repeating

our visit. It will be enough to say that our most unfavorable impressions of Ireland were derived from this place. We visited the Roman Catholic church—which the people insist on calling "the chapel," and were shocked by the conduct we witnessed there. While a number of old people were devoutly engaged in prayer, the boys from a neighboring school were using the building as a play-ground, all shouting at the top of their voices. Of course, there was no religious service at the time, but the usual lamp was burning at the altar. Such irreverence was the more astonishing as the Irish people are not generally lacking in the respect which is due to sacred places.

On the wall of the church-yard we observed an official document, recording a touching incident. An Irish soldier having performed a difficult and dangerous service in India, had been offered a gold medal; but had declined the reward, preferring that his heroic action should be thus officially announced to the people of Mallow. Though in a distant land, he cared most for the good opinion of the friends of his youth; and no doubt his relatives were more delighted with this public announcement than they would have been with any number of medals and decorations.

At Kildare we had an excellent opportunity of seeing one of the mysterious "Round Towers," a structure, which to us, was possessed of the most absorbing interest. There are more than a hundred of these towers in Ireland, built no one knows exactly when or by whom, but supposed to have had originally a religious significance. The one at Kildare is very slender, and is probably about a hundred feet in height.

Having set out to take a look at Dublin, we must not linger by the way. Our first impressions of the city were not so favorable as they ought to have been. We had been directed to stop at a hotel which was said to be one of the most celebrated in Ireland. It turned out to be a miserable, tumble-down affair with a very few rooms, and a very few very much like a den of thieves. At first we intended to change our lodgings, but a magnificent dinner reassured us; and on making inquiries we found that the house is really celebrated for its dinners. There are very few lodgers, but it has been established for more than a century, and is regarded as perfectly respectable. In short, like a singed cat, it was much better than it looked, and as we had not long to stay, we concluded to make the best of it. There are, however, so many fine hotels in the city that it was a real misfortune to have been directed to this dark and gloomy place.

The city of Dublin far exceeded our anticipations. It is situated on both sides of the river Liffey, which is spanned by nine beautiful bridges. It looks prosperous, and is probably twice as large as it was half a century ago. "Indade," said an Irishman, "how can it be otherwise, since it is always Doublin'?"

It must not be supposed, from this specimen of the Irish brogue, that the dialect is general or even common in the city of Dublin. We have never heard a better English than in the great cities of Ireland, and in England we have frequently heard the assertion, that the language is more correctly spoken in Dublin than anywhere else in the world.

The public buildings of the capital of Ireland are, of course, exceedingly fine, and the Bank of Ireland, the Four Courts, and other sumptuous edifices, are admired by all travelers. More interesting is the Castle which has been since A. D. 1172, the official residence of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Its spacious but gloomy apartments are decorated with paintings and mediaeval relics, and gave us our first idea of royal grandeur.

Trinity College is well worth a visit. It occupies an immense square in the heart of the city, the buildings forming a quadrangle, with a beautiful bell-tower in the center. It was vacation time, but the bulletin boards at the entrance were still covered with announcements of lectures by the several professors, strongly reminding us of what we had often seen at home. The Examination Hall is a superb room, containing portraits of eminent benefactors of the institution. We especially noticed that of the celebrated philosopher Berkeley, who resided for some time

in our country, and left bequests to several American colleges. There also we saw, but did not hear, the organ which Queen Elizabeth took from one of the vessels of the Spanish Armada, and presented to the college, which she had founded. The college chapel is richly decorated, the students occupying the front seats, while the "big nobles," as they call the professors, occupy a gallery in the rear, from which, of course, they cannot help seeing all that is going on below. In the dining-room each one of the four college classes has its own table, while a fifth table on a raised platform is reserved for the tutors. The library numbers about 250,000 volumes, and is kept in exquisite order. It contains many rare manuscripts, and a number of books printed by Caxton, Wynkyn de Worde, and other early English printers, whose imprints are now regarded as beyond all price. The curiosities were shown us by a man versed in first editions, who after duly impressing us with his learning, concluded by asking us for a sixpence. It was our first experience of one of the ways of Europe.

The two principal churches of Dublin are St. Patrick's and Christ Church Cathedral, both of them belonging to the Episcopal Church. In the former church Dean Swift for many years officiated, and there are still many things to remind the visitor of the great satirist. Among these we may mention the pulpit from which he preached; his tomb and that of his eccentric servant; and the fine monument of General Schomberg, erected at Swift's expense, "because," as he says in a Latin inscription, "the General's relatives neglected to do justice to his memory." The whole church is full of objects of historical interest. There is the font from which Cromwell sacrilegiously watered his horse, in order to show his contempt for the established church, and many memorial tablets dating from a period long anterior to the Reformation. Among the recent monuments is a magnificent sarcophagus with a statue of Archbishop Whately.

One of the sides of the city is occupied by the order of Knights of St. Patrick, and is richly decorated. Each knight has a stall, or throne, surmounted by his arms, and with his banner suspended over it. The chapel, we believe, is only used on rare occasions, when new members are admitted to the order.

Christ church is at least as fine as St. Patrick's, but it has no historical monuments. Both churches have recently been magnificently restored—St. Patrick's by Sir Arthur Guinness, the celebrated brewer of "brown stout," and Christ church by Mr. Rowe, a distiller of Irish whiskey. It is not surprising that these gentlemen, who have spent several millions of their money in these enterprises, should be popularly known as "the stout and spirited supporters of the Church of Ireland."

We visited St. Patrick's library, a place which would have delighted the soul of Dr. Dryasdust; for though quite extensive, there is hardly a book in it which is less than fifty years old. One of the greatest curiosities is a large volume written by Bellarmine, the celebrated Roman Catholic controversialist, which once belonged to Archbishop Laud, and has his autograph on the title-page. Almost every page contains some of Laud's manuscript notes, and in many of these he strongly dissents from Bellarmine's conclusions. Laud was the great champion of prelatry, and it was for his "popish tendencies" that he was finally convicted of treason, and executed on Tower Hill, in the days of the Puritans. These notes go far to show that there is truth in the statement, contained in his "Diary," that though a cardinal's hat was offered him, he declined it with the answer that "something dwelt within me which would not suffer that till Rome is other than it is."

There are many statues and monuments in Dublin, erected in honor of royal visitors or distinguished citizens. Of these, the granite obelisk dedicated to the Duke of Wellington, who was born here, is perhaps the most imposing.

The public parks are numerous, and generally well kept. The largest of these is Phoenix Park, which contains we think, about eighteen hundred acres. Our Irish friend, Jerry Murphy, was wrong as to the locality, but not so far astray as regards his facts, when he exclaimed: "The finest park in

all America is Phoenix park, Dublin, be all the powers!"

Though not a great manufacturing center, Dublin is busy and thriving. The stores in the principal streets are very attractive, and there seemed to be no lack of customers. In one of the back streets we saw a large number of hucksters selling articles of various kinds under sheds in front of the houses, with their goods scattered all over the sidewalk.

Altogether our impression of Dublin was very favorable. The modern part of the city is well built, without much architectural display, but with an appearance of solidity and comfort. The lower portion contains many wretched tenements, with a squalid population; but in this respect Dublin is probably neither better nor worse than most other European cities.

We did not remain long enough to enable us to speak confidently on this subject; but a glimpse was enough to assure us that the ancient town is deserving of its reputation.

Some one has called Dublin "a diamond in a setting of emerald." It is, of course, an extravagant compliment; but if we agree to call Ireland "the emerald isle," we can hardly refuse a higher title to its capital.

J. H. D.

For The Messenger.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

Fellowship, as we understand it, includes the idea of communion, a uniting together, a joining of interests, a co-partnership, or a sharing together. It is a social relationship, in which suffering or pleasure, loss or profit, is mutually suffered or enjoyed by all who are associated together.

Christian fellowship is the same thing elevated from the merely natural and moral, into the sphere of the spiritual and religious.

Here it becomes a communion of the Christian life, of spiritual joy and sorrow, of peace and conflict, and of all those spiritual forces which together constitute the divine life in individual believers.

It is a fellowship of faith in the common Saviour, a fellowship of love, of joy, and of sorrow.

Such communion rests in another communion, or common participation of the means of grace, of the word of God, of the holy sacraments, through which we enjoy communion with the Apostles of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Ghost cementing our fellowship, by the communication of His graces, secures to us "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God," and thereby we are made "partakers of the divine nature," and are "filled with all the fullness of God."

All this implies, of course, membership in the church, nor can this blessed fellowship be enjoyed by any who are not in the communion of the church.

The church is outwardly an association or society, which includes in its communion all the children of God. But it is not a mere outward bringing together of separate and independent individual Christians, first made such, and then joined together afterwards. It does bring them outwardly together, but it does this by the power of an inward life, which the Holy Ghost communicates to them through the means of grace. The church is the bearer of this life, and the sacraments are the means by which it is conveyed to the faith of those who enter into her fellowship. If this is the correct view, it seems clear that outside of the church this fellowship is impossible, for there is no communion.

St. John, in announcing the design of his first Epistle, says, "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you that ye also may have fellowship with us (i. e. the Apostles); and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ; and these things we write unto you that your joy may be full." If this means anything, it is, that our "joy may be full" when, and only when we are joined in the fellowship of the church. St. John leaves no room for, and gives no quarter to any outside profession, or separatistic independency. The communion of divine life, and love, with its fullness of joy, includes, in his mind, all the children of God, of whom none is excluded. Hence St. John also says, "If we walk in the light as He (God) is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." To walk in the light of God, is to let it reflect its glory in our lives, or to "let our light shine" "more and more," in the way of going forward. And to be cleansed from all sin by the blood of Christ, means that, in consequence of our fellowship with God, which is evinced by walking in the light, we are more and more cleansed from sin, and made more and more holy. In other words we are progressing in sanctification continually, when we are in fellowship with His church, and walking in the light. It is only when we are in this holy fellowship, that we confess our sins, and are cleansed from all unrighteousness.

Let no one therefore, imagine himself child of God, or a joint heir with Christ, who ignores the communion of His Church.

Family Reading.

For The Messenger.

SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS.

BY REV. D. Y. HEISLER.

Heard ye, elate, th' enrapt'ring strains
Ere sweeping o'er Judea's plains,
In sweet celestial lays?
They were the songs of Angels bright
Rejoicing in the coming light—
The light of better days!

That joy is changed to tort'ring fears,
And eyes are moist with briny tears,
Which now in torrents fall;
And hearts, with gladness full of late,
Now drain the bitter cup of fate—
Of wormwood and of gall!

The Despot, by the wise men mocked,
Is mad with rage, and men are shocked
With horrid deeds of blood;
For, sending forth his servile hosts,
Of victory o'er the weak he boasts,
Avenged in crimson flood!

Fulfilled is what the prophet spake,
In Rama all of grief partake,
A plaintive voice is heard;
The voice of mourning, sad and deep,
For Rachel doth her children weep,
And weeps with hope deferred!

O bloody scene!—O cruel fate!
Where all was peace and joy of late,
Now sorrow reigns supreme;
There lamentation loud and strong,
And mourning o'er the cruel wrong,
Are found in their extreme!

The blood of infant martyrs shed,
In vengeance, thus, to slaughter led,
No longer they are near;
Sweet Innocents in crowds are slain,
And comfort none doth now remain,
The smitten heart to cheer.

Easton, Penna., Dec. 16th, 1878.

GOLD, FRANKINCENSE AND MYRRH.

A CHRISTMAS MEDITATION.

BY MISS ROSE PORTER.

"When they had opened their treasures, they
presented unto Him gifts, gold and frankincense
and myrrh."

"They presented unto Him gifts." Eleanor Harbold repeated the words aloud, as though suddenly they had taken a new meaning to her—and verily they had, for never before had she given more than a passing thought as to what was signified by those first gifts that were offered the Christ—the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Eleanor was one of those who believed every gospel word to be like a precious diamond, that holds not one, but many rays of light in its crystal-clear heart;

those three gifts, she straightway felt that they had not been recorded without holding more than one type of what our Christmas-tide offerings should be, for "every deed and every incident of Scripture is a lesson to all times of what it behooves mankind to perform." And as thus she thought, she said aloud: "If the record of Christmas-time celebrating now-a-days were to be written, would those words still hold true? Do we give Christmas gifts unto Christ now, as the wise men of old did? Do we open our treasures, that we may present unto Him of our very best—our gold, our frankincense and our myrrh?" And Eleanor Harbold leaned her head upon her hand, while she thought long and earnestly. The table before her was spread full of gifts, ready to be presented on the morrow—the near-coming Christmas morning—to friends, many and dear—gifts, some costly and rare, some simple and unpretending. Yet had she chosen one of those gifts with that holy thought in the heart that ever comes to the giver who gives from love to Christ, His own tender assurance of acceptance: "Inasmuch as ye do it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye do it unto me." Unto Christ! Ah, that motive verse, truly it holds the gold of Christmas-tide, as well as all other giving.

After thinking thus, no wonder Eleanor Harbold, sitting alone on that Christmas eve, in the warm glow of cheery fire and lamp-light, asked herself over and over, had she one such gift for the Christ, the Lord of Christmas? No wonder, looked at in the clear seeing of what in truth a Christmas gift for Him demands—a gift that must be as gold in intention and purity of motive, fragrant as frankincense and myrrh in its odor of sweet charity—that bitterly she sighed. For what had she to offer? Not that but, in a dim, undefined way, Eleanor had for years recognized, as we all do, that Christmas giving is an outgrowth of Christmas love, and that Christmas love dates backward to the manger and to the angels' song, "Good-will and peace." But with her, as also with many of us, till that hour when brought face to face with the foundation why of kindly Christmas cheer keeping, the pleasure of the custom had overlaid the deeper meaning; and then, with the eagerness of a child, she sought among the pages of the many volumes of an-

cient and modern lore that lined her well-filled book-case for some exact definition of what the gold, the frankincense and myrrh, as gifts to Christ, really meant—of what they typified. But the printed pages gave Eleanor but meagre replies, for already she knew that gold was the king of the metals, the one most remarkable for beauty and lustre of hue, the one most imperishable. Already she knew that gold—just the brief word—was the word-picture by which men of all ages had been wont to denote the loftiest power of intellect, the noblest, most valiant deeds of self-sacrificing love and truth; a golden act, a golden thought, full well we every one know the significance of the terms. Eleanor knew, too, that the imagination of early Christians had seen in each gift "a special significance, appropriating myrrh for the human nature, gold for the king, frankincense for the divinity." But something that touched her own life, her own giving, was what she sought to find typified in those first Christmas gifts—something that would help her, Eleanor Harbold, to offer to the Christ, on the Christmas morning, similar tributes of love, even gifts of gold and of fragrant odors. As she sought this something, memory turned backwards to the days of the nearly-ended year, seeking to find some deed done just from love to Him, Christ—some deed to offer as a Christian gift; but—and again she asked the question, what had she to offer? And, as this she asked, a gentle voice seemed to whisper a response to her listening heart, and this was no strange event; for do we not all, if we will hearken, hear answers to our heart-questions?—whispered answers forsooth, only heard by the ear of faith, but none the less audible!

That heart-voice said to Eleanor: "There came a stranger to your door, a youth, travel-stained and worn: for a moment fear lurked in your heart as you gazed on the hardened face of the man, who looked so young in years, and yet so old in wrong-doing; the man with the touch of the morning of life still on him, and yet with the shadow of life's darkest night too—the shadow of evil. What was it stayed your hand as you were about to close the door and turn from his pleadings? What was it which led you to give him food, and something more, for with the food you gave him a kindly word, and the word was prefaced by a prayer, and the man went on his way with a smile on his face, a look of the day-dawn in place of the night-shadow? Was it not a thought of Christ that prompted that prayer and that word, and was not that thought a golden offering?"

"There came a woman to your door, one of the countless number striving to earn a scanty livelihood by the sale of simple wares, and you listened to her story,—listened though time pressed, though pleasure was calling you away, and as you listened, the woman's burden of care grew lighter,—so sweet to tired hearts, is sympathy; and was not that sympathy like the odor of incense, for did you not hearken to the woman's story because you remembered Christ? There came weeks of care and anxiety to your home, daily cares, petty irritations, the very hardest of all to encounter, and your impulse was to meet irritation and vexation with impatient word, or leastways with a frown; but something bade you be patient, to smile rather than to frown, to make life full of sweetness, to flavor it with the myrrh of kindness; and was not that something your memory of Christ?"

To that heart-voice Eleanor made reply: "But these are such little things to offer, not one fair deed among them all; such little, little things!" And softly the voice responded: "Yet the kindly word, the prayer, the patient listening, the consistent, daily living,—did they not all spring out of your love to Christ?" And as Eleanor heard those words she knew the Lord of Christmas would not turn away from her Christmas offerings, simple though they were, for "no gentle deed will He disdain" if done from love to Him.

And then Eleanor repeated to herself the angels' song:

What were those the Magi offered?—
Frankincense and gold and myrrh?

Sometimes it is hard to listen
To a word unkind or cold,
And to smile a loving answer;
Do it, and you give Him gold.

Thoughts of Him in world or pleasure,
Those small grains of incense rare,
Cast upon a burning censor,
Rise in perfumed clouds of prayer.

There are sometimes bitter fancies,
Little murmurs that will stir
Even a loving heart; but crush them,
And you give our Jesus myrrh.

Or resign some little pleasure,
Give it to Him instead, to win
Help for some poor soul in peril,
Grace for some poor heart in sin.

Mercy for poor sinners, pleading
For their souls as for your own:

So you make a crown of jewels
Fit to lay before His throne.

Give Him now, to-day, forever,
One great gift,—the first, the best:
Give your heart to Him, and ask Him
How to give Him all the rest."

That song, surely it held for Eleanor Harbold, as it holds for us all, the essence of what our Christmas gifts to Christ should be, if, like the wise men of old, we open our treasures to give unto Him our gold, frankincense and myrrh. —*New York Observer.*

APOSTROPHE TO WATER.

Where is the liquor which God the Eternal brews for all His children? Not in the simmering still, over smoky fires choked with poisonous gases, and surrounded with the stench of sickening odors, and rank corruptions, doth your Father in Heaven prepare the precious essence of life, the pure cold water. But in the green glade and grassy dell, where the red deer wanders, and the child loves to play, there God brews it. And down, low down in the deepest valleys, where the fountains murmur and the rills sing; and high upon the tall mountain tops, where the naked granite glitters like gold in the sun; where the storm-cloud broods, and the thunderstorms crash; and away far out on the wide wild sea, where the hurricane howls music, and the big waves roar, the chorus sweeping the march of God: there He brews it, that beverage of life, the health-giving water. And everywhere it is a thing of beauty—gleaming in the dewdrop; singing in the summer rain; shining in the ice-gem, till the leaves all seem turned to living jewels; spreading a golden veil over the setting sun, or a white gauze around the midnight moon; sporting in the cataract; sleeping in the glacier; dancing in the hail-shower; folding its bright snow curtains softly about the wintry world; and weaving the many-colored iris, that seraph's zone of the sky, whose warp is the rain-drop of earth, whose woof is the sunbeam of heaven, all chequered over with celestial flowers by the mystic hand of refraction. Still always it is beautiful, that life-giving water; no poison bubbles on its brink; its foam brings not madness and murder; no blood stains its liquid glass; pale widows and starving orphans weep no burning tears in its depths; no drunken shrieking ghost from the grave curses it in the words of eternal despair. Speak on, my friends: would you exchange it for the demon's drink, alcohol?—*A. W. Arrington.*

SECRET OF CONTENT.

The other day, as I was walking on one of the streets of Newport, I saw a little girl standing before the window of a milliner's shop. It was a very rainy day. The pavement of the sidewalks on that street so sunken and irregular that in wet weather, unless one walks with very great care, he steps continually into small wells of water. Up to her ankles in one of these wells stood the little girl, apparently as unconscious as if she were high and dry before a fire. It was a very cold day, too. I was hurrying along wrapped in furs, and not quite warm through even so.

The child was but thinly clothed. She wore an old plaid shawl and a ragged knit hood of scarlet worsted. One little red earstod out unprotected by the hood, and drops of water trickled down over it from her hair. She seemed to be pointing with her finger at articles in the window and talking to some one inside. I watched her for several moments and then crossed the street to see what it all meant.

I stole noiselessly up behind her, and she did not hear me. The window was full of artificial flowers, of the cheapest sort, but of very gay colors. Here and there a knot of ribbon or a bit of lace had been tastefully added, and the whole effect was really remarkable, gay and pretty. Tap, tap, tap, went the small hand against the window-pane, and with every tap the unconscious little creature murmured, in a half-whispering, half-singing voice: "I choose that color." "I choose that color." "I choose that color."

I stood motionless. I could not see her face, but there was in her whole attitude and tone the heartiest content and delight. I moved a little to the right, hoping to see her face without her seeing me, but the slight movement caught her ear, and in a second she had sprung aside and turned towards me. The spell was broken. She was no longer the queen of an air-castle decking herself in all the rainbow-hues which pleased her eye. She was a poor beggar child, out in the rain, and a little frightened at the approach of a stranger. She did not move away, however, but stood eying me irresolutely with that pathetic mixture of interrogation and defiance in her face which is so often seen in the prematurely developed faces of poverty-stricken children. "Aren't the colors pretty?" I said.

She brightened instantly. "Yes, ma'am; I'd like a gown of that blue color." "But you will take cold standing in the wet," said I. "Won't you come under my umbrella?" She looked down at her wet dress suddenly, as if it had not occurred to her before that it was raining. Then she drew first one little foot and then the other out of the muddy puddle in which she had been standing, and moving a little closer to the window, said, "I'm not going home just yet, ma'am. I'd like to stay here awhile."

So I left her. But after I had gone a few blocks the impulse seized me to return by a cross street and see if she were still there. Tears sprang to my eyes as I first caught sight of the little upright figure standing in the same spot, still pointing with the rhythmic finger to the blues and reds and yellows, and half chanting under her breath as before: "I choose that color." "I choose that color." "I choose that color."

I went quietly on my way without disturbing her again. But I said in my heart, "Little messenger, interpreter, teacher, I will remember you all my life!" Why should days be ever dark, life ever be colorless? There is always sun; there are always blue and scarlet and yellow and purple. We cannot reach them, perhaps, but we can see them; if it is only "through a glass" and "darkly," still we can see them. We can "choose" our colors.

It rains, perhaps, and we are standing in the cold. Never mind. If we look earnestly enough at the brightness which is on the other side of the glass, we shall forget the wet and not feel the cold. And, now and then, a passer-by who has rolled himself up in furs to keep out the cold, but shivers nevertheless, who has money in his purse to buy many colors if he likes, but nevertheless, goes grumbling because some colors are to dear for him,—such a passer-by chancing to hear our voice, and see the atmosphere of our content, may learn a wondrous secret—that pennilessness is not poverty, and ownership is not possession; that to be without is not always to lack, and to reach is not to attain; that sunlight is for all eyes that look up, and color for those who "choose."—*Helen Hunt.*

"WE HAVE SEEN HIS STAR IN THE EAST."

BY PRISCILLA J. OWENS.

Watching the stars of old,
Wise men marvelled at night,
When the glided azure wide unrolled,
With new and wondrous light.
On from the gates of morn
They followed the sign afar,
Saying, "Where is the King that is born?
For we have seen His star."

Long had the world of night
Waited the promised King,
She heard 'midst her tears with wild delight,
The sweep of the angels' wing.
The strength of sin was broke,
Death's fetters scattered far,
As glad the heavenly chorus woke,
"Lo, we have seen His star."

Down through the halls of time
Floated that joyful strain,
Till echoes broke in notes sublime
From sky and earth and main.
The signs of discord died,
Or melted soft afar,
As swelled through space that glorious tide,
"Earth, we have seen His star."

Mute were the idol fanes;
The rude unseemly mirth,
Crumbled to dust the ancient chains
That weighed upon the earth.
The long benighted lands,
Saw gates of truth unbar,
And stretch to God unfettered hands,
"Ah, we have seen His star."

Speed on, O, message bright,
As dawn's reviving rays,
Girdle the world with a zone of light,
The voice of prayer and praise.
Where blue waves greet the morn,
Or sunset ebbs afar,
Rejoice! rejoice! a King is born,
And we have seen His star.

GOD'S COFFER.

There was once a respectable wealthy man, whose name was Benedict—which signifies "blessed." And he had a good right to bear such a name; for God had blessed him richly with all good things, and all who knew him blessed him, too; and he always sought to make others happy—the stranger as well as the neighbor—particularly the poor and needy. But he did it in this way. When he had passed a joyous day with his friends, he would go into his chamber, and think: "There are many who have not had such a day of enjoyment. How would it have been if I had invited as many more guests?" Then he would lay by of his money as much as the feast had cost him, in a chest, which he called "God's Coffin." In the same way, if he heard that there had been a fire anywhere, he would give largely for the relief of the unhappy sufferers; and then he would behold his own house, and go into his own chamber, and think, "All here is safe and unhurt," and im-

mediately he would lay up some in "God's Coffin." Whenever he heard of any destruction of property from thunder or hail, or drought, or other mischances, he would lay up gold on account of it in "God's Coffin." Also, if he had occasion to buy wine or costly furniture, he would purchase it but moderately, only to enable him the better to entertain his friends; and then go into his chamber and say, "So much more mightest thou have bought and have enriched thy stores," and lay up the value in "God's Coffin." Besides which, he would willingly give of his best wine if a sick person needed it. And as he lay on his dying bed, and death was approaching, the poor, the widows, and orphans lamented and wept, and said, "Who will take pity on us when Benedict is taken from us? As long as he lived we wanted for nothing; but what will now become of us?" But he said, "A good householder takes care that when he is away, his children should not want. Take 'God's Coffin,' with all that is in it. It belongs to the poor, the widows, and the orphans; divide it, and use it well and wisely." And so "God's Coffin" has remained for hundreds of years, to the comfort of the needy, and the man is remembered with grateful blessings.—*Krummacher.*

MAKING PEOPLE HAPPY.

A poetical writer has said that some men move through life as a band of music moves down the street, flinging out pleasure on every side through the air to every one, far and near, that can listen. Some men fill the air with their strength and sweetness, as the orchards in October days fill the air with the ripe fruit. Some women cling to their own houses like the honeysuckle over the door; yet, like it, fill all the region with the subtle fragrance of their goodness. How great a bounty and blessing is it to hold the royal gifts of the soul that they shall be music to some, fragrance to others, and life to all. It would be no unworthy thing to live for, to make the power which we have within us the breath of other men's joys; to fill the atmosphere which they must stand in with a brightness which they cannot create for themselves.

Useful Hints and Recipes.

BOILED BROWN BREAD.—Two cups of meal, one cup of flour, one teaspoonful of soda, two-thirds cup of molasses; put it into a greased pudding boiler or tin pail; plunge in boiling water and boil three hours.

LEMON AND ORANGE TINCTURE.—Never throw away lemon or orange peel; cut the yellow outside off carefully, and put it in a tightly-corked bottle with enough alcohol to cover it. Let it stand until the alcohol is a bright yellow, then pour it off, bottle it tight, and use it for flavoring when you make rich pudding. Add lemon and alcohol as often as you have it, and you will always have a nice flavoring.

BOILING.—Boiling is the most abused branch of cooking. We know that many well-meaning housewives, and even professional cooks, boil things that ought to be prepared otherwise, with a view to economy; but a great many do it through laziness. Boiling requires as much care as any other branch, but they do not think so, and, therefore, indulge in it. Another abuse is to boil fast instead of slowly. Set a small ocean of water on a brisk fire and boil something in it as fast as you can; you make much steam, but do not cook faster, the degree of heat being the same as if you were boiling slowly. If the object you boil, and especially boil fast, contains any flavor, you evaporate it, and cannot bring it back. Many things are spoiled or partly destroyed by boiling, especially meats, coffee, etc. Water that has been boiled is inferior for cooking purposes, its gases and alkali being evaporated.

CHOCOLATE CAKE.—Stir to a cream one large cup of butter with two and a half of powdered sugar; next add the beaten yolks of six eggs and one cup of milk, the whites of four eggs well whipped, a little salt, and one pound of flour, through which has been sifted three teaspoonfuls of sea foam. Take out into another bowl about one-third of the batter, stir in this half a pound of Baker's chocolate grated, half a cup of powdered sugar, a very little milk and as much flour as will make the dark batter of the same consistency as the white. Bake in jelly tins. There will be four or five of each, according to their thickness. Whip one of the reserved whites and stir in powdered sugar for icing. Flavor with rose-water. Proceed in the same manner with the remaining white, stirring in a couple of spoonfuls of grated chocolate; flavor this with vanilla. Spread the white cake with chocolate icing, and the chocolate cake with the white icing, and pile in alternate layers four deep.

Miscellaneous.

THE LONG AGO.

BAYARD F. TAYLOR.

Oh! a wonderful stream is the river Time,
As it runs through the realm of tears,
With a faultless rhythm and a musical rhyme
And a broader sweep and a surge sublime,
As it blends in the ocean of years!

How the winters are drifting like flakes of snow,
And the summers like birds between,
And the years in the sheaf, how they come and
they go

On the river's breast with its ebb and its flow,
As it glides in the shadow and sheen!

There's a magical isle up the river Time,
Where the softest of airs are playing.
There's a cloudless sky and a tropical clime,
And a song as sweet as a vesper chime,
And the Junos with the roses are straying.

And the name of this isle is the "Long Ago,"
And we bury our treasures there;
There are brows of beauty and bosoms of snow,
There are heaps of dust—oh! we loved them
so—

There are trinkets and tresses of hair.

There are fragments of songs that nobody sings,
There are parts of an infant's prayer,
There's a lute unswept and a harp without strings,
There are broken vows and pieces of rings,
And the garments our loved used to wear.

There are hands that are waved when the fairy
shore
By the fitful mirage is lifted in air,
And we sometimes hear through the turbulent
roar

Sweet voices we heard in the days gone before,
When the wind down the river was fair.

Oh! remembered for aye be that blessed isle,
All the day of our life until night;
And when evening glows with its beautiful smile,
And our eyes are closing in slumbers awhile,
May the greenwood of soul be in sight.

AFGHANISTAN.

For two years just passed the readers of foreign news were exercised in studying the geography of modern Europe. But that is now at an end—deferred rather than closed, and waiting for the completion of new maps of that whole region, if only the combatants will be still long enough to allow the maps to be made. A new lesson is in the meantime to be given, and we are all to be called to study up a still more remote, and hitherto, less-known region, than was the Balkan peninsula, to wit: Afghanistan, or the land of the Afghans. In looking over a map of Asia, one will see this name drawn across a portion of that great continent, not far from its centre. It is northeast of the Persian Gulf, east of Persia, southeast of the Caspian Sea, and south of Turkistan, and northwest and west of British India, from which it is separated in part by the lofty range of the Himalaya mountains. It is itself a mountain land, for its lowest valleys are many thousands of feet above the level of the sea, while its mountain peaks are clothed in perpetual snow in the face of a semi-tropical sun. And it is also, as to its own surface, a mountain land, for it is traversed by lofty ranges from east to west, and from northeast to southwest, with scattered, broken crags over most of its surface. Eastward it is skirted by the great river Indus, into which some of its streams flow; but the general trend of the land is south-westward, and most of the streams run in that direction. But they do not discharge their waters into sea or river, but lose themselves in the sands of the desert.

In form and extent Afghanistan is an irregular square of about four hundred and fifty miles in either axis, giving it an area of a little more than 200,000 square miles. Its surface is extremely uneven, having deep and broad valleys clothed with rank vegetation, and lofty mountains covered with noble forests of deciduous trees below and evergreens above, up to the line of perpetual snow. In the valleys, and along the river-courses, are found most of the fruits and cereals of Europe, and also many that belong to the inter-tropical climates. The animals of the country, also, both wild and domestic, are of a like mixed character, the bear and the tiger being found in the same forests, the wolf and the monkey, the parrot and the partridge—a kind of happy family, where each kind seems to feel itself quite at home.

The population of the country is estimated at about 9,000,000, made up of a great diversity of nationalities, and yet all, to a pretty good degree, nationalized. The Afghans are the principal race, in respect to both numbers and character, and because of their dominance they give their name to the whole country. But besides these there are numerous tribes of alien blood, but chiefly of northern origin. The Afghans have a tradition that they are of Jewish origin, and both their languages and some of their religious observances favor that notion. They indeed style themselves children of Israel, and preserve among their traditions bits of Jewish history, mixed indiscriminately with Mohammedan doctrines and legends.

Religiously the Afghans are Mohammedans of the Sunni sect, holding in the most intense detestation the opposite sect of Shia. Towards Christians they are more tolerant, esteeming them much better than Pagans, because they have their religion in a book. As Mohammedans, they are, of course, polygamists, though the practice is a luxury in which only the princes and chiefs of clans and a few wealthy traders can indulge. On the other hand, the edict of the Koran against the use of alcoholic drinks is wholly neglected, and every Afghan is expected to get drunk at every opportunity. They have schools for the instruction of children, where they commit to memory texts from the Koran, and also learn a few of the simplest elements of numbers. There are also higher and better schools for the children of the wealthy, and also colleges for those who are to pursue any of the learned professions. The arts of industry, though at a low level, are not altogether neglected. Their agricultural implements are of the most primitive character, and those employed in the mechanical arts are not much better; and yet their manufactures are often of a high degree of excellence.

Like all semi-barbarous nations, the Afghans are much addicted to war. They use fire-arms, and have, instead of a musket or rifle, a piece of their own manufacture, nearly six feet long, and of corresponding calibre, a terribly destructive, as well as a most unwieldy weapon. Lately both their arms and their military tactics have been somewhat assimilated to European methods. From India they have procured of late years great amounts of condemned arms and accoutrements, and deserters that have come among them from the Anglo-Indian army have taught them the tactics of the armies of Europe. Now that they have come into conflict with the English, it may be suspected that both arms and officers will be supplied them from the north with the connivance of the Russian officials.

The present antagonistic relations between the Ameer, or king, of Afghanistan, and the British government of India, is but the continuance of what has existed during two generations. The policy of the British in India is one of unremitting aggression, striving ever by war or diplomacy to add province after province to the Indian empire; or, where actual annexation is not practicable, to bring the native princes into relations of practical dependence. In the pursuit of this policy, about fifty years ago, a British army was sent to Cabul, the capital of Afghanistan, under the pretense of protecting a pretender to the throne, whom the British government was seeking to maintain in opposition to another. But even in the presence of that army, the exiled prince was brought back again, and was at length recognized by the British commander. But after a time the native warriors rose upon the foreigners, and drove them into their cantonment, where, after being forced by starvation to capitulate, they were all put to the sword. This horrible affair, of course, led to a war of vengeance and reprisal, but that campaign was one of devastation rather than of permanent occupation; and having done its work of rapine and slaughter, it again evacuated the country. Since that time there have been successions of wars and revolutions in the country, and of intrigues between its rulers, on one side, with the British on the one hand, and Russia on the other, without any satisfactory results. Shere Ali, youngest son of Dost Mohammed, the Ameer whom the British forces drove from the throne, but who returned again while the British army lay at Cabul, is now the ruling Ameer. By aggressions on both sides his dominions have become the border-land of both the British and the Russian possessions in Asia, and it is suspected that just now the Russian influence is dominant at Cabul. A Russian envoy is known to have lately visited the Ameer; but when the same favorable recognition was demanded by the governor-general of India, it was peremptorily denied, and that is construed as an intolerable affront by the British Government—which, no doubt, is only too willing to find an excuse for sending an armed force to the Afghan capital.

The animus of this now-opened Afghan war is identical with that displayed during the late conflict in Eastern Europe—in both cases it is a struggle between England and Russia for territorial supremacy in Asia—in which ambition alone dictates the policy and the conduct of both parties, and in which moral considerations go for absolutely nothing. England and Russia are the upper and the lower millstones, while in this case Afghanistan is the corn between them; so that, whichever of the two may triumph, the midmost and third one must be ground to powder. Such is the policy of nations, even of those called Christian, out of which the divine Providence often brings forth His own good purposes, compelling the wrath of man to praise Him.—*Zion's Herald*.

CHOATE AND WEBSTER.

Perhaps the weight and power of Webster's character were due as much to the hours he spent in the woods and fields and on the ocean, chatting with farmers or sailors as he was engaged in hunting or fishing, as to the hours he spent in his study.

Now Choate, superior to Webster in quickness of apprehension, and imagination was an indoors man. The larger portion of his mature life was passed in the stifling atmosphere of the courts, or in what Milton calls "the still air of delightful studies;" that is, in his library. He, of course, was not so foolish as to neglect exercise; but his exercise was commonly confined to long walks through the streets or around the Common of Boston. No one ever enjoyed Nature more intensely; but he never sojourned with her. His friend Charles G. Loring, one of his competitors of the Suffolk bar, once invited him to pass a summer day at his beautiful residence on the Beverly shore. Mr. Choate was full of enthusiasm as he walked among the woodland paths at the varying aspects of sky and ocean; he doubtless stored up in his mind images of natural beauty which flashed out afterward in many a popular speech or legal argument; but he exhausted his capacity of the place to feed his eye and imagination in half-a-dozen hours. "My dear Loring," he said, in parting, "there has not been a twentieth part of a minute since I entered this terrestrial paradise that I have not enjoyed to the top of my bent; but let me tell you that should you confine me here for a week, apart from my work and books, I know that I should die from utter ennui. You are fortunate in being able serenely to delight in it day after day." If he had been asked to pass a fortnight with Webster at Marshfield or at his New Hampshire farm, and had accompanied him day after day in shooting or fishing expeditions, not even Webster's conversation could have saved him from becoming devoured with an impatient desire to escape from the monotony of such an existence. All the eccentric originals of the neighborhood, whom Webster delighted in year after year, he would have delighted in for a day, and then dismissed them from his mind as intolerable bores; the mountain or ocean scenery might have enthralled him for a few days more; but the shooting and fishing, in which Webster took such pleasure, would have seemed to him a scandalous waste of time, which might have been more profitably bestowed on *Æschylus* and *Aristophanes*, on *Thucydides* and *Tacitus*, on *Hooker* and *Jeremy Taylor*, on *Bacon* and *Burke*, or *Shakespeare* and *Milton*.—*Harper's Magazine*.

DAMAGES TO SUBMARINE CABLES.

Every one who has at all studied oceanic telegraphy, perfectly understands the dangers to which the shore ends of the communicating wires are exposed from the action of currents, the anchors of ships, &c. But the general idea prevailed that when once the cable was laid in the depths of the ocean it was in safety. Such, however, is not the case, for the inhabitants of those regions seem to resent the intrusion. In many cases, owing to the inequalities of the sea, the wires can not rest on the bed, but in some places hang in festoons. Then they are liable to accidents from the larger denizens of the sea, among which we may particularly mention the sunfish (*Orthogoriscus*). That peculiar but little known animal is nearly circular, of a brilliant silvery white, and at night emits a powerful phosphorescent light, whence its name probably arose. When swimming it turns round like a wheel, and moves with great rapidity. It grows to an enormous size, often attaining four feet in diameter, and some of them are said even to reach eight feet. Specimens have been caught weighing 500 pounds. It is found in all seas, from the Arctic to the Antarctic circle. Where the tail is in ordinary fishes, this curious creature has a sort of flattening in its circular shape, from which bony spines project. Not long since an interruption occurred in a cable, and on examination it was found that it had been penetrated by one of the caudal spines of the sunfish. Even when the wire lies quiet at the bottom it is not safe, for a species of bottom attacks the gutta-percha, and gradually destroys the conductivity. But the most curious instance of damage inflicted on a cable is that which lately befell the one from Portugal to Brazil. A fault having been found, the tests were applied and the precise spot indicated. The wire was fished up, and was discovered to be broken. In one of the ends was entangled a large whale. The monster was covered with parasites, and in attempting to free itself from its tormentors had broken the cable, and then managed to so twist itself in the coils of one end that it was held fast as a prisoner, and not being able to rise to the surface for air was drowned.—*Galignani's Messenger*.

HOW LORD SALISBURY WORKS.

Lord Salisbury understands and carries out his business as Foreign Secretary in a manner heretofore unheard of. It is usual for the Minister who, by the accident of a Parliamentary majority and the chances of Cabinet shuffles, is placed temporarily at the head of a department, to avail himself largely of the knowledge and experience of the permanent officials, who necessarily know much more of the matters with which he has to deal than he can possibly know himself. This is especially the case with the Foreign Office, of the business of which very little can be learned from the newspapers. When, therefore, a new man, fresh from outside ignorance, comes to the Foreign Office, or even a man who has been there before and consequently has already acquired some of the knowledge and the leading tradition, he usually relies much upon, consults much with, imparts all his intelligence to, and is to a large extent guided by the superior permanent officials of the office. Lord Salisbury does nothing of all this. The permanent officials see, as a matter of course, the overt despatches which arrive at and leave the office, but he never communicates to them those private letters in which the real information is conveyed, and by which the real business is done; he never confides in them and does not consult them on the weightier matters of policy.

This mode of doing business is as dangerous as it is new; for when Salisbury leaves the Foreign Office, which we may suppose he will do in the course of time, there will be no record left of the real course of action, and nobody but himself will be able to trace the thread of the policy he has pursued. What makes it the more dangerous is that Lord Salisbury has the mind and the pen rather of a smart leader writer than of a statesman. It is but the other day that he was penning bitter but inconsequential leaders in the *Saturday Review* at three guineas and a half a week, and recent State documents, like the secret memorandum and the Cyprus Convention, show that the letter writer is still stronger in him than the Foreign Minister.—*London Vanity Fair*.

Selections.

We live no more of our time than we spend well.—*Carlyle*.

Frowns blight young children as frosty nights blight young plants.

How will our souls reach heaven if our hearts never rise above earth?

O how portentous is prosperity! How comet-like; it threatens while it shines.—*Young*.

God requires no more than we are able to render, and God offers the assistance of His own grace.

A thankful spirit has always fresh matter for thankfulness. To praise God for the past is the sure way to secure mercies for the future. Prayer and praise live or die together.—*Romaine*.

The Providence which watches over the affairs of men works out of their mistakes, at times, a healthier issue than could have been accomplished by their wisest forethought.—*Froude*.

Few better replies are upon record than that of the young polemic, to whom a bishop once said: "If you will tell me where God is, I will give you an orange." "If you will tell me where He is not, I will give you two," was the child's answer.

Look not at life by that dim light Which through thy curtain'd window creeps, What can an eye discern that weeps? Go share the fight, leave self behind, Give others joy, and thou shalt find, Even in affliction, peace of mind, In weakness, heavenly might.

The Scriptures give several names to Christians, expressive of their graces and character and expectations: disciples, for their knowledge; believers, for their faith; servants, for their obedience; brethren, for their love; saints, for their holiness; and heirs, because they are soon to receive the inheritance of heaven, which Christ has gone to prepare for them above.

I think if thou couldst know,
O soul that wilt complain,
What lies concealed below
Our burden and our pain,—
How just our anguish brings
Nearer those longed-for things
We seek for now in vain,—
I think thou wouldst rejoice, and not complain.—*Adelaide A. Procter*.

Toil bravely on, oh! faithful one, toil on,
Despite the faltering feet and feeble hand:
Do thou wate'er the Father's love demands,
Work till the daytime of thy life is gone.

And when the shadows warn thee of the night,
Take thou the promise to thy weary breast,
Finding therein thy paradise of rest,
God's word, "At eventide there shall be light."—*E. H.*

As flows the river calm and deep,
In silence toward the sea,
So floweth ever, and ceaseth never,
The love of God to me.

What peace He bringeth to my heart,
Deep as the soundless sea,
How sweetly singeth the soul that clingeth,
My loving Lord, to Thee.

How calm at even sinks the sun
Beyond the clouded west,
So tempest-driven, into the haven,
I reach the longed-for rest.

If you want to spoil all that God gives you; if you want to be miserable yourself, and a maker of misery to others, the way is easy enough. Only be selfish, and it is done at once. Think about yourself; what you want, what you like, what respect the people ought to pay to you, what people think of you; and then to you nothing will be pure.—*Charles Kingsley*.

Grant, my Lord, that the ears which have heard the voice of Thy songs, may never hear the words of clamor and dispute; that the eyes which have seen Thy great love may also behold Thy blessed hope; that the tongues which have sung the *Sandus* may also speak the truth; that the feet which have walked in the church may tread the region of light; that the bodies which have tasted Thy living body may be restored to newness of life.—*Prayer of the Oriental Church*.

In the Lord Jesus Christ we have a "Day-man," or Mediator, who, partaking in His person of both the Divine and human natures, can uphold the claims of God's inflexible justice, having Himself satisfied to the utmost the requirements of His holy law on behalf of guilty men; who can therefore be admitted to pardon and Divine favor by that gracious hand stretched out from heaven to bring back to God all who trust in Him.—*Rev. J. W. Fintley*.

"I pity the man who has never, in his best moods, felt his life consoled and comforted in its bitterness by the larger lives that he could look at and know that they too were men living in the same humanity with himself, only living in it so much more largely. So much of our need of consolation comes from the bitterness of our life; its pettiness and weariness insensibly transferring itself to all life, making us skeptical about anything great or worth living for in life at all. It is our rescue from this debilitating doubt that is the blessing which falls upon us when, leaving our own insignificance behind, we let our hearts rest with comfort on the mere fact that these men are of great, broad, generous, and healthy lives—men like the greatest that we know."

Science and Art.

A SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION.—The Russian Government has determined to send a scientific exploring expedition to the lofty table land of Central Asia, known as the pamir, or roof of the world. It will consist of a topographer and two botanists, who will be accompanied by an escort of Cossacks.

TERRA COTTA.—This beautiful, durable and comparatively cheap material is more and more finding favor with architects and builders. The new Art Museum in Boston is profusely decorated with panels of this material, and it plays its part in the construction of the building in the shape of mullions, window caps, sills, etc. All kinds of terra cotta articles are now made in this country, and it bids fair to become, as it deserves, an important branch of industry. Better than any known substance it will stand heat, as indeed it may well do since it is subjected during the process of manufacture to a temperature of some 2,000 degrees (Fahr.). Nor is it liable to crack if cold water is thrown upon it when in a heated condition. This is a quality possessed by few substances that are available for building purposes.

MILITARY SIGNALLING.—Not only are rockets, but among the aids to warfare sent out to the north-west frontier are some curiously contrived shells which, when fired into the air on a dark night, will, by means of a parachute and some magnesium stars, turn the gloom into light, and enable artillery or infantry, to disturb the repose of the enemy. Signalling, too, has received an impetus, and supposing that the excellent system which has been invented by Colonel Yonge, R. A., and adopted by the Austrians in Bosnia and the Herzegovina, be finally taken up by the English Government, a great step will have been made in advance of the old flag arrangement, which is too complicated and tedious for the purpose of rapid warfare. Colonel Yonge, by means of twelve segments of a circle identical with those formed by the spaces between the figures on a clock face, has contrived a series of signals which are so perfect, and at the same time so simple, that their use is possible after a few minutes' instruction, and they are besides infallibly safe against either mistake by friends or comprehension by the enemy.—*London Telegraph*.

Personal.

General Grant proposes spending a year in Asia. There is said to be no diplomatic significance in the visit.

The late Rev. George Gilfillan, of Dundee, is said to have married more people than any minister in Scotland. He had certain evenings appointed for marrying the poor "without money or price."

Ex-Empress Eugenie has commenced a suit against the French State for property alleged to belong to herself and son, including the Fontaineau Chinese Museum, and various armors and pictures.

The Rev. Dr. Cumming of London is about to celebrate his fiftieth year in the ministry. As a man and a preacher he has few rivals, but his influence of late years has been impaired by his unfulfilled predictions as to the precise time of the coming of Christ.

Bishop Matthew Simpson, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has recently delivered the annual series of lectures of the Lyman Beecher course, before the students of the Yale Theological Seminary, at New Haven, Conn. His predecessors in the course have been Rev. Drs. Dale, of England, W. M. Taylor and John Hall, of New York, Phillips Brooks, of Boston, and Henry Ward Beecher, of Brooklyn.

Books and Periodicals.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE. No. 1802.—December 28, 1878.—CONTENTS. *Petrarch, Quarterly Review*; *Blanca*, By W. E. Norris, *Belgravia*; *A Red-cross Ride through Snow and Death, Temple Bar*; *The Cottage by the River, Blackwood's Magazine*; *The Sorrows of Lord Penance, Saturday Review*; *Clerical Self-Conceit, Spectator*; *Portrayal, "Baby's Dead," After the Concert, Cardinal-Flowers, A Rajput Chief of the Old School*. Published every Saturday by Littell & Gay, Boston.

The Messenger.

REV. P. S. DAVIS, D. D., EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

Rev. S. R. FISHER, D. D.,
Rev. T. J. BARKLEY,
Rev. A. R. KREMER, } Synodical Editors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS. Communications on practical subjects and items of intelligence relating to the Church, are solicited. Persons who forward communications should not write anything pertaining to the business of the office on the back of their communications, but on a separate slip—or, if on the same sheet, in such a way, that it can be separated from the communication, without affecting it.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the return of unaccepted manuscripts.
For Terms, see First page.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1, 1879.

"MADE UNDER THE LAW."

The incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ marks a season of joy for us, but it was a season of humiliation for Him. The angelic choir had scarcely ceased their song over the manger, before He submitted to that external rite, by which He came formally under the law, to meet its requisitions, and redeem us from its curse. The eighth day was the naming day of our Lord, and He was called Jesus, because He was to save His people from their sins. But, strange as it may seem, so truly had He taken upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh, that He seemed to own Himself a sinner. He hid the glory of His supernatural conception and of His spotless birth, "being as was supposed, the son of Joseph." No voice now proclaimed that He was not what men judged Him to be, a sinner of a sinful race. "The Holy One was to receive the mark of man's unholiness; the spotless birth of the Creator was to be cleansed by the offering of two poor worthless creatures, the pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons."

Yet He was the mighty God, and the government was upon His shoulders. And that which was laid upon Him, was not lawless hands, as afterwards, but the law of God; not the law as perverted by sinful men, who said: "We have a law and by our law He ought to die;" but the command of God Himself, enjoining the suffering and the shame that we might be spared. At His circumcision the law was put upon Him, as some one has said, its full outpouring on Calvary, and His humbling Himself to the death of the cross.

Surely we may learn something from this interval of "reproach," between the song of the angels and the proclamation of the star, which, though now lighting the wise men from the East, did not as yet stand "over where the young Child was." Only one mark was there of glory,—the Name of JESUS, "which was so named of the angel, before He was conceived in the womb." Yet even that glory was veiled. The light shined in darkness but the darkness comprehended it not.

A FALSE MAXIM.

The *Methodist*, one of the most sprightly and welcome of all our exchanges, contained a sermon, a short time ago, under the head of "Seeing is believing." The sermon was preached at the re-opening of the Cornell M. E. Church, New York, by Rev. Geo. H. Goodsell, who took for his text the words of Philip, "Come and see!" and the discourse contained a great deal of excellent practical truth, but the maxim placed over it—a maxim which we believe to be false, is not illustrated in it; and we call attention to the general subject, because we think the idea that sight and faith are the same thing is misleading and harmful, especially in these days, when there is such a strong tendency to rationalism and materialism in one form or another.

It seems as if the senses which were the avenues through which sin entered into the heart of our first parent, have since been closed to the highest apprehension of the truth of God, and that the new faculty of faith has, in His wisdom, been made to take the place of sight, so that unless we have this faith, we can never know Him. And it is strange that men will confound the one with the other, when the two are put in such palpable contradistinction, in the

Bible. We are to walk by faith, not by sight. We look not at the things that are seen but at the things that are not seen.

It is with this power of faith that the children of God, are endowed by the Holy Ghost, and that alone enables them to apprehend that for which they are apprehended, so as to rise above the world. Our Divine Redeemer expressly says, "A wicked and adulterous nation seeketh a sign." This was the sin of the Jews. "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." "Master we would see a sign from Thee," they said. This was the lowest kind of belief, and could only lead to a knowledge of the lower classes of wonders which meet the senses. Jesus said to Thomas, "Because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

It is not likely that the outward manifestations to which Philip invited Nathanael would, in themselves, have convinced him that Christ was the Messiah, although they may have been in his case the stepping-stone to faith; for hundreds saw the same things, yet continued to doubt and scorn the Saviour. John the Baptist, the ordained fore-runner of Christ, knew Him not, until evidence was given him which cannot be expected to be vouchsafed to every one who may yet learn to know Him. When St. Peter made his confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," our Saviour said, "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." There was nothing then in the mere outward appearance of our Lord recognizable to the senses, even of His immediate disciples, which authenticated His person and mission to them, and it would be a sad day, if men seeking Him who is the Truth, would believe only what they could see. Yet the idea seems to prevail that nothing is to be accepted but what is made patent to the senses because according to their notions, "Seeing is believing."

NEW YEAR'S GIFT.

Christmas is past and so are Christmas gifts; and we hope the suggestion of the Editor-in-Chief did not pass unheeded: that our people, in making Christmas gifts to their friends and to the poor, select *The Messenger* as one of the gifts. That is, that they send on to the publication office the price of *The Messenger* for one year, and designate the person to whom they wish to have it sent as a gift. Well, now, did ever our Chief entertain from his tripod a happier thought? Don't believe—don't see how he could.

Suggestions are seeds that grow rapidly as mushrooms. And so now a subordinate on the editorial staff takes on a wise look, and says; we too have a suggestion to make—and here it is:

This is New Year's Day; and those who, in the excitement of Christmas preparations, forgot the plain hint from editorial headquarters will please remember that New Year's gifts are as acceptable as Christmas gifts; and, also, that no date is so suitable and so convenient for a subscriber to begin with as the first of January. A good and valuable gift? Well, think for a moment; only two dollars and postage for a New Year's gift, that will be coming to the recipient every week until this bright New Year shall be old, and shrivelled, and dead. A gift that will make the recipient thank the kind donor—whether known or unknown—at least fifty-two times. Is it nothing to be remembered so constantly with heartfelt thanks?

And the benefits conferred. These will be much greater than are derived from many more costly gifts. There is not a number of *The Messenger* issued that is not worth, to many persons, more than the subscription price for a year. Because—if for no other reason—it is their paper, the paper of their Church, and, therefore, a familiar friend, whose voice is recognized above the murmur of a thousand other voices, and whose teachings have the tone and the animus of home, the spiritual home of the Reformed Church. Are there not many of our readers who will make

earnest of this repeated suggestion, and consider what an amount of good they might accomplish in this way?

If those of our people who are accustomed to make holiday gifts to their friends, would send *The Messenger* to some who do not take it; and if our people generally who are able, would procure it for one or more who are too poor to pay for it themselves; there is no doubt that the subscription list would be more than doubled—and thereby our publication interests greatly improved, and much good effected among our people. K.

OUR SUBSCRIPTION LIST.

We have endeavored, by various means, to enlist the sympathies, and call forth the activities, of the friends of the MESSENGER in its behalf, especially among the brethren in the ministry, not only in the way of securing the collection of outstanding dues, but also of increasing our subscription list. In doing this, we have sought to make them feel, that a well-conducted religious paper, such as our Board furnishes, is indispensable to the prosperity of the religious denomination, as such, and also to the substantial success of the ministry in accomplishing its specific work; and, in order that it may faithfully subserve this important end, as well as sustain itself in a pecuniary point of view, it is absolutely necessary, that it obtain a circulation equal, if possible, to the number of families connected with the denomination itself.

How far we have succeeded, or may yet succeed, in our cherished purpose, time itself only will correctly tell. Should the result be a success, none will rejoice more than we, not from any selfish considerations, but on account of the great good that will thus be secured to the cause of Christ, as such, and especially to the religious denomination, in whose welfare our warmest sympathies, and most earnest activities, have been enlisted, throughout the long period, during which we have been largely entrusted with this particular sphere of Christian labor.

The present holiday season is most opportune, not only for the renewal of their subscriptions, on the part of present subscribers, but also for adding greatly to their number. We trust our friends will cheer the hearts of all connected with our publication interests, as well as delight those generally, who rejoice in the prosperity of the Church, by their earnest and successful efforts in this particular direction. If they do not find it convenient to engage in direct efforts themselves, we hope they will, at least, endeavor to get others to devote themselves to this specific work, and especially, if some duly authorized agent comes into their field, they will cheerfully open it to him, and do all they can to make his operations in behalf of the periodicals of the Church, efficient and successful.

For some time past, the Rev. H. W. Hoffmeier has been giving special attention to the interests of our papers, especially within the bounds of the Potomac Synod. He has had the varied experience incident to this kind of labor. We are certainly grateful to those of our brethren, who freely opened the way for him in their charges, and encouraged and assisted him in his special work. In such instances generally, his returns have been very encouraging to us, and will, we trust, be beneficial to the readers themselves, to whom our paper has thus obtained access, and also greatly aid our brethren in their labors among their people.

Quite lately, Mr. H. K. Binkley, from the vicinity of Reading, has also become enlisted in this special work. He seems to bring with him a more than ordinary enthusiasm to the distinctive duties to which he feels himself called in this direction. In a recent tour through a portion of Cumberland Valley in the interests of a kindred enterprise, he made special efforts in behalf of our papers at Waynesboro, and particularly within the bounds of the Greencastle charge, with very encouraging success. Quite an accession has been thus made to our subscription list in that section of the Church. The brethren laboring

statedly in that field encouraged and aided him in his work. This was especially the case with the pastor of the Greencastle charge, and with the result he is very much cheered, and will, we trust, be greatly furthered by it in his pastoral labors.

Whilst we hope no one will delay attention to the work in his charge, in the expectation of having it accomplished by means of some special agent of the Board of Publication, we trust that when they do present themselves for carrying out their cherished purpose, all will extend to them an open hand, and afford them every facility and assistance in their power, in accomplishing their work. None, we trust, will ever have occasion to regret what they may do for them in this particular direction. We certainly shall be truly thankful for any service that may be thus rendered us, through them, and greatly cheered in the midst of the arduous, and often greatly perplexing labors incident to our sphere of duty. F.

THE RIGHT KING.

We are glad to see our able contemporary, the *Presbyterian*, contending for the teachings of the Westminster Confession in regard to the Sacraments. Some weeks ago it said that according to the Calvinism of the Presbyterian Standards, Christ and the benefits of the New Covenant, are represented, sealed and applied in the Sacraments, to believers. To this the *Examiner and Chronicle* takes exception, and says that if the word "applies" is made to teach that grace is conferred in any sense, the Calvinism of Presbyterians is not that of Baptists, nor of Calvin himself.

The Presbyterian re-asserts its position and says:

"The *Examiner* italicizes the words 'applied to,' as if some lurking heresy lay under them, and then it dexterously changes the language and uses the word 'confer' as the equivalent of the words 'applied to,' and turns upon us with the question whether the *Presbyterian* intends to assert that the sacraments in any sense 'confer grace?' We used the word 'applied' to show that the efficacy of the sacrament was not due to an inherent power in the sacrament itself, but to some power acting through it, applying the benefits of Christ's redemption to the believing soul. So the church uses it in the Confession of Faith, ch. xxvii. sec. 3. The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments, rightly used, is not 'conferred' by any power in them.' How is it conferred then? may be asked, and by whom? The Confession gives answer as follows: 'The efficacy of baptism is not tied to the moment of time wherein it is administered; yet notwithstanding, by the right use of the ordinance, the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost.' We could give the *Examiner* some more of this good reading, but we forbear. If these sentences of the Confession do not set forth the Calvinism of Baptists so much the worse for Baptists."

We give the above quotation in full, because it illustrates the disposition of some people to put the mere outward form to the exclusion of the operation of the ever Blessed Spirit, for baptism itself, and then decry the efficacy of the sacrament. Surely this divine side is not to be ignored, as necessary to constitute the full force of either sacrament. No one has ever contended that the mere outward elements independently of what God does in and through them, have inherent power, and the *Presbyterian* is right in saying that "the grace promised is not only offered but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost." The full quotation given by the *Presbyterian*, shows that in the minds of the Westminster divines, the law is that grace is conferred in the sacrament, and that although not tied to it, the cases where it is bestowed independently of it are exceptional. Our Divine Redeemer placed Baptism at the very forefront of His spiritual dispensation, and no one has a right to disregard His commands with the presumption that the grace will be given to him just as well without it.

It seems strange that the Baptists, who make everything to consist in a manner of the outward form, should yet be outraged by the thought, that grace should be conferred in it "in any sense." That

after all, we respectfully submit, is the very formalism which they charge upon others, for why should they insist upon the form so strenuously if there is not even an accompanying blessing?

The idea of the *Chronicle* that John Calvin did not believe in sacramental grace, will appear strange to any one who has read the great reformer's "Institutes."

DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONS.

BY THE SUPERINTENDENT.

The Regions Beyond.

It is a comparatively easy matter to criticise our method of carrying forward our missionary affairs. We all know, that here there is a want of system, and a want of concert of action, as well as a want of liberality, among our members. It is more difficult, however, to remedy such defects, and to infuse such vigor into this work as to surmount and overcome the difficulties that lie in the way. No persons feel this so sensibly as those who stand in the centre, feel the pressure, and know the responsibility placed upon them by the Church. We would fain do more, and gladden the friends of missions everywhere with brilliant results, if we could. We would be glad and most happy to extend our work in every direction, to send out one wave after another in ever-widening circles of beneficent influence, and so accomplish something worth mentioning in extending the kingdom of God on earth. But here we find ourselves straitened, hampered and thwarted in our most earnest efforts by the want of means to accomplish what all desire to see accomplished. We have done something. We have built up missions, in our neighborhoods or Classes, from small beginnings, until they have become self-sustaining, and it is a pleasure now to hear of their prosperity, with their lamps trimmed and burning. But, although our means increase, we do not get beyond our rivers, our mountains, or our State lines. We are sometimes asked to take up missions that might be saved by neighboring pastors, or supplied by some new arrangement of pastoral charges. We do not mean that in this way the gifts of the church are lost, they go to a good object, and, as a general thing, bear good fruits, sometimes a hundred-fold. But this growing tendency to confine ourselves to our own counties or Classes, in our missionary efforts, can hardly be called missionary work at all. It becomes the mere ordinary work of a Classis, which ought to be performed at its annual meeting without any help from abroad. It absorbs our missionary funds, and we have nothing left to give for the support of the gospel in places where there are no churches, and no ministers, and the people perish for lack of knowledge, which is the proper missionary field. It leads us into a narrow rut, from which it seems hard to extricate ourselves. It is just the opposite of the plan pursued by the apostles. They did not want to complete their work in any city, town or district. When the Church seemed to be planted at one point, they pressed forward to spread the gospel to the regions beyond. This was especially the plan of the Apostle Paul, the greatest of all missionaries, and the model for all succeeding times.

There is a great opening for the extension of the Reformed Church beyond its present limits, if we are only sufficient for such a plain duty. We are doing something in this way in Oregon and California, where, in a few years, we will, we believe, see and rejoice in important results. We are making an encouraging beginning in Delaware and Eastern Maryland. But there are other openings, open doors, which Christ has set before us, and which no person can shut upon us, if we wish to enter. We have already referred to Florida. We ought to have a pioneer there to gather our Pennsylvania people into congregations, and then, soon after, send several young men to assist him in the cultivation of that large and interesting field. A new Classis could then be organized, and the work of church extension would go forward almost by its own impetus. The same thing might be done in other States in the South, in Texas, and elsewhere. Fortunately, we have a good foothold in North Carolina, an old Classis containing some of the best population in the State, our friends and relatives, perhaps, bearing our names, who emigrated from the North a long time ago. For some reason, unaccountable to us, this Classis has not, as yet, spread its boughs so as to cover the land, as similar communities have done in the North and West.

But there is no reason why it should not still become a missionary centre, from which the Reformed Church should extend into the neighboring States of South Carolina, Georgia, and then westward into Tennessee, Alabama and Louisiana. This, it appears to us, is its mission, and the reason why it exists. Such a movement would, we are persuaded, awaken a lively interest in all our churches in the North, and call forth a genuine liberality in carrying forward such a truly Christian work. Emigrants from our own State prove to be a blessing wherever they settle in the South, by their industry, economy and steady habits. As agriculturists, they redeem waste places and cause the country to smile around them, and it is believed that Pennsylvania religion would, on a higher plane, also prove a blessing to our Southern brethren. In this way, our good German people might serve a patriotic, as well as a Christian purpose, in promoting the true interests of the South, no less than the future welfare of our beloved country.

It is sometimes thought, that our churches can be induced to give more liberally, if the missions are located near at home. This is a mistake. Many of them, we know, can be rallied to a greater degree of liberality, when the call comes from afar, where the destitutions are real and manifest. In this respect, they are like most other Christians, although perhaps less inclined to overlook the wants near at home in their zeal to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Less able than our foreign German brethren to carry on our missions in the most economical way, we nevertheless can do it with less expense than some of the English denominations around us. Our ministry is increasing in numbers, and our young men can be trusted, if the Church shows an earnest determination not to be confined to any pent-up Utica. It is erroneous to suppose, that they are all more desirous to get into comfortable places than to spread the gospel. Let the call or challenge be made upon those who are yearly

Youth's Department.

CHRISTMAS.

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

How did they keep His birthday then,
The little fair Christ, so long ago?
Oh, many there were to be housed and fed,
And there was no place in the inn, they said,
So into the manger the Christ must go,
To lodge with the cattle and not with men.

The ox and the ass they munched their hay,
They munched and they slumbered, wondering
not,
And out in the midnight cold and blue
The shepherds slept and the sheep slept too,
Till the angels' song and the bright star ray
Guided the wise men to the spot.

But only the wise men knelt and praised,
And only the shepherds came to see;
And the rest of the world cared not at all
For the little Christ in the oxen's stall,
And we are angry and amazed
That such a dull, hard thing should be!

How do we keep His birthday now?
We ring the bells and we raise the strain,
We hang up garlands everywhere,
And bid the tapers twinkle fair,
And feast and frolic—and then we go
Back to the same old lives again.

Are we so better, then, than they
Who failed the new-born Christ to see?
To them a helpless babe,—to us
He shines a Saviour glorious,
Our Lord and Friend and all—yet we
Are half asleep on Christmas day.

—Christian Union.

A SNOW-FLAKE'S NEW YEAR STORY.

I am a snow-flake, only a little snow-flake. My home was away up above yonder gray clouds. Ah! how happily we snow-flakes lived there!—but my subject is of this life, and not of the past. One night the old cloud sailed contentedly along, congratulating herself that all we snow-flakes were fast asleep; but I was not; it seemed wicked to spend that night in slumber, for all our neighbors in the skies appeared as if preparing to unite in celebrating some great event. The moon shed her calm, holy light, smiling benignly on the great world below, of which we timid little snow-flakes had heard such mysterious rumors. Most of the stars were glittering in all their glory, but our cloud, in her course, met a little one still engaged in polishing up his rays. "Tell me, brother," said the cloud, "what is the cause of all this rejoicing in the heavens?" "The cause!" exclaimed the star, pausing in his work from very surprise: "know you not that this is New Year's Eve?" "Is it possible that I could have overlooked the blessed festival? I must hasten to contribute to the general rejoicing. My snow-flakes have too long been unmindful of the duty for which they were created," and, with that, she shook her sides, and down we snow-flakes fell. Oh! in what a flurry we fell! How large and dark the world seemed! The wind, hastening to show his approval of the old cloud's endeavor, with laughter, whirled us round and round. When I could so far collect my senses, I found myself rapidly descending among what appeared to me a hopeless labyrinth of formidable looking buildings. Then the wind proved himself my friend, and showed, in spite of his loud voice and gruff manners, that he had a kindly heart, for by his aid I kept clear of the smoky chimneys, and escaped the other monsters who would soon have made way with a little snow-flake.

Collecting my scattered wits, I prepared myself for observation.

"Hurrah! Snow! it's come!" cried a voice near me.

Oh! how pleasant it was to find that some one was glad to see me, and peeping into the window, I saw the happy effect the news had on some night-capped children, who joined in a dance of joyful anticipation.

"Surely, New Year will bring me a sled."

"Snow, I declare! How provoking! I did hope we would have an agreeable New Year," and a discontented face looked out at me from behind the parted curtain of a parlor window.

"I do believe it is snowing!" said mamma, as she drew down the blinds. "How the children will enjoy to-morrow!"

"Snowing, you say! Ah me!" and the old grandmother's thoughts wandered back to a snowy New Year in the dim past.

"They make me think of angels, the white snow-flakes, and of last New Year," and the lonely widow's thoughts strayed to a little new-made grave in the church-yard, which the snow-flakes were covering fast, spreading a beautiful robe, beneath whose warmth the gentle flowers, types of the Resurrection, would sleep until the awakening of Spring.

The merry chimes rang in New Year morning; the sunlight sparkled in splendor on all my brother and sister fairies of the snow; happy laughter met my ear, as the new sled dashed along the slippery pavement. Then the jingle of bells, and a sleigh glided by; from beneath the handsome robes, a happy face looked forth; all signs of discontent had vanished. The children gathered around mamma's knee, grandma smiling on the little group, as they listened, with earnest attention, to stories of New Years long ago.

New Year was over; the lonely widow arose from her prayers and looked out on the holy night. The beautiful moon shone down on the snow and made it almost as light as day. "Thus," thought she, "does even the night-time of our lives seem light through Him, who is the Light of the World." And she raised her eyes with a smile, thinking of the little angel happy in a home far beyond where the snow-flakes came from.

Please forgive my story. I am only a snow-flake, a little New Year snow-flake, but even the least of us has a mission, and that of a snow-flake is to set a beautiful example of a life of purity and love. The world is peopled, as it were, with snow-flakes. Some fall in dingy alleys, where their beauty is marred, but they may be just as useful, although in a different way, as those whose lot has fallen in pleasant places.—*Presbyterian Banner*.

MODE OF RECOGNITION AMONG ANTS.

The combats and communications of ants are among the most interesting and mysterious phenomena. The Rev. H. C. McCook has given an account to the Academy of Natural Science at Philadelphia, of some experiments he has made to determine what is the mode of recognition among ants. He has studied the pavement ants, which he has observed engaged in continued combat for over a fortnight, the warriors being only the workers or neuters. There is no distinguishable difference between the ants of the fighting parties, yet they recognize each other infallibly as friend or foe. They challenge all comers with their antennae; if they are friends, they pass on; if foes, they straightway interlock and "fall too." Sometimes many ants are congregated against one, which is being torn limb from limb. Mr. McCook surmised that recognition was based upon a certain odor emitted by the respective factions. He found that if they were enveloped in an odor of eau-de-cologne, while not at all deprived of activity, all became harmonious; those who were previously engaged in battle unclasped one another, and they went on for several days amicably feeding, burrowing, and building. The same experiment was tried on the carpenter ants, which behead their enemies; their hostile proceedings were not stopped by eau-de-cologne.—*Evening Post*.

EYE-GATE.

Keep close guard, boys and girls, over Eye-Gate. In these days of steam and lightning and printing-presses, the Arch-Enemy often brings up his mightiest forces over against Eye-Gate.

In olden times, you know, they used to build high and strong walls all around their town. In these walls were great gates to shut out enemies, and to let in friends, and supplies of food and clothing for the towns-people; and on some high place overlooking the town was the citadel, or castle of the king to whom the town belonged. This was strongly fortified, and was the last point of defence. When an enemy seized this, they were complete masters of the whole place.

So old John Bunyan writes of the "famous town of Mansoul," in a story called the "Holy War," which every

one should read. This town of Mansoul had five gates, which, like the walls, could never be opened or forced but by the will and leave of those within. The names of these gates were Ear-Gate, Eye-Gate, Mouth-Gate, Nose-Gate, and Feet-Gate. And there was reared up within the town a most famous and stately palace, which the great and good King who built the town intended for Himself alone, and committed the keeping of it only to the men of the town.

When I see a boy or a girl spending their time over trashy novels, I want to cry out, "Mind Eye-Gate sharp! an enemy is about." When I see them interested in the sensational weeklies and story-papers that swarm through the land, and like the frogs of Egypt, are found on every side, even in the bedrooms and in the trunks and pockets of bright-eyed boys and girls, I say in sorrow, "Alas! Eye-Gate has been left open, and the frog of discontent has already hopped in." Soon lessons at school will be too dull to be studied, mother's wishes and father's commands will seem too irksome to be carried out, and the boy's thoughts and the girl's dreams will be of any thing but duty.

When I see a boy or girl who likes to gaze upon the illustrations of crime and villainy that are sent out in every direction, I know that the foul frog of uncleanness has entered that soul, and ruin and desolation are not far away. Soon the citadel of Mansoul, the fair castle of the Lord, the heart, with its precious treasures, will be defiled. Satan will himself enter with his destroying forces, and the end is easy to see. O, boys and girls! as you value your soul's salvation, set a strong guard over all the gates, and especially over Eye-Gate.—*The Little Christian*.

NO BURDENS.

There is a gateway at the entrance of a narrow passage in London, over which is written, "No burdens allowed to pass through."

"And yet we do pass continually with ours," said one friend to another, as they turned up this passage out of a more frequented and broader thoroughfare. They carried no visible burdens, but they were like many who, although they had no outward pack upon their shoulders, often stoop inwardly beneath the pressure of a heavy load upon the heart. The worst burdens are those which never meet the eye.

There is another gate—one which we are invited to enter, must enter, if we would ever attain to rest and peace, and over which is also inscribed, "No burdens allowed to pass through." This is the strait gate which leads to life, saying to each one of us, "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

GOOD KING WINCESLAUS.

Good King Wincelous thus looked out
On the Feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about,
Deep, and crisp, and even.
Brightly shone the moon that night,
Though the frost was cruel,
When a poor man came in sight,
Gathering Winter fuel.

"Hither, page, and stand by me;
If thou know'st it, telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?"
"Sire, he lives a good league hence,
Underneath the mountain,
Right against the forest fence,
By St. Agnes' fountain."

"Bring me flesh and bring me wine,
And bring me pine-logs hither;
Thou and I shall see him dine
When we bear them hither."
Page and monarch, forth they went,
Forth they went together,
Through the rude wind's wild lament
And the bitter weather.

"Sire, the night grows wilder now,
And the wind grows stronger;
Fails my heart, I know not how,
I can go no longer."
"Mark my footsteps good, my page,
Tread thou in them boldly;
Thou shalt find the Winter's rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly."

In his master's steps he trod,
Where the snow lay dented;
Heat was in the very sod
Which the saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, if you,
Wealth and ways possessing,
If ye then shall help the poor,
Shall yourselves find blessing.

—Churchman.

ST. NICHOLAS.

The history of this personage is so mythical that it may be questioned whether he ever had any existence. He is said to have been born at Patara in Lycia, in the latter part of the third or the beginning of the fourth century. December 6th is the anniversary of his birth, and is so celebrated by the societies bearing his name. Having great renown for piety he was appointed, while yet a layman, Bishop of Myra, by Constantine the Great. So precocious was he that he is represented as holding fasts as an infant. Thus the "Golden Legend" informs us that "He wolde not take the breast but ones on the Wednesday, and ones on the Fridaye." The Dominicans adopted him as their tutelary saint, and the Russians hold his memory in great veneration. In the Greek Church his rank immediately follows that of the great fathers. He is to those of the Greek persuasion what St. Patrick is to the Irish branch of the Roman Catholic Church. And considering the number of his worshipers, old and young, and of all forms of religious belief, he is the most popular saint of Christendom.

During the Dark Ages the functionary denominated the "boy-bishop," was chosen and consecrated on St. Nicholas' day. Aubanas says that in Franconia the students elected a prelate and two deacons, and that the mitred bishop was conducted to the church in solemn procession, and presided over divine service. This over, the three divines would go from house to house, demanding money as the bishop's subsidy. Such is a specimen of the degradation to which "The Church" descended. As early as 867 the Constantinopolitan Council attempted to abolish the custom, but it continued popular. In England it obtained a strong foothold, and was kept up till a late date, a boy-bishop being generally elected in every parish. His principal qualifications were youth and beauty. Edward I. and Edward III. countenanced the custom. It was prohibited by the Council of Salisbury in 1274. Henry VIII. of England issued proclamations against it. Queen Mary restored the custom, but the influence of the Puritans secured its destruction.

Modern usage portrays St. Nicholas not as a mitred bishop, clothed in gorgeous robes, and surrounded by a cloud of incense, but as a son of the North Pole. He is represented as a rosy-faced, fur-clad, jolly, rotund little fellow, and a very Jehu of a driver. His team consists of reindeer of extraordinary speed, able to visit in one night all the houses in Christendom. His sleigh is laden with money, toys and candies for all good children, and whips for all bad ones. His activity and strength are so marvellous that no chimney-flue has yet been found too narrow or crooked for him to traverse and reach the myriads of stockings hung up for his attention. His knowledge seems intuitive; he knows at a glance whether this stocking has a good owner, or whether that one is the exponent of a bad owner, and he deposits accordingly.

His influence on the world is wonderful. Christmas might be a universal presentation season. But the myth, aside from the anniversary of the Saviour's birth, seems to be the principal cause for a wide-spread and mighty effect. The capital invested in the manufacture and sale of toys and other presents, most of which are sold just before Christmas, must be exceedingly great. The operatives engaged in their production must be numerous. And parents, having taught their children the fiction, must yield to the inevitable by untying their purse-strings, and gratifying youthful importunities, and as this has been the case for successive generations during long centuries, so it must progress in proportion as the world's population increases.

How did this custom originate? The legend is as follows: Three maidens, destitute of marriage portions, found one morning just before Christmas, some money on their window-sills. This was understood to be the work of St. Nicholas (or Santa Klaus, or Knecht Clobes, as the Dutch call him) thus becoming the benefactor of the young. Neogorgius says:

"St. Nicholas money used to give to maydens secretlie,
Who, that he still may use his wonted liberalitie
The mothers all their children on the eve do
cause to fast;
And when they every one at night in senseless
sleep are cast,
Both apples, nuttes and pears they bring, and
other things beside—
As caps, and shoes, and petticoates, which secretlie
they hide—
And in the morning found, they say that this St.
Nicholas brought.
Thus tender minds to worship saints and wicked
things are taught."

Another legend states that he restored to life three murdered children, and thus became entitled to the respect of their successors in all generations. Our readers can choose between these two legends.

St. Nicholas is also the patron saint of sailors. When seamen, belonging to the Island of Minorca, had escaped great dangers, they would go to St. Nicholas' chapel, and hang up in token of gratitude votive pictures containing representations of the perils they had escaped. In this they imitated the Greeks and Romans, who thus honored Neptune.

Scholars, too, were protected by him. Thus the parish clerks were called "St. Nicholas' clerks." But in King Henry IV. Gadshill employs the term as a cant phrase for highwaymen:

Gads.—"Sirrah, if they meet not with St. Nicholas' clerks, I'll give thee this neck."

Chamberlain.—"No, I'll none of it. I pry thee, keep that for the hangman: for, I know thou worship'st St. Nicholas as truly as a man of falsehood may."

How it was that highwaymen came to be placed under his patronage we do not know, unless the idea involves a bitter sarcasm on the corrupt clergy. At that period footpads were sometimes called "St. Nicholas' clergymen." Perhaps, after all, the expression may have originated in the other Nick, whose age is much greater than that of him of Myra.—*Exchange*.

Pleasantries.

Charley Tradollar told us recently that his last sweetheart had a poor taste for the fine arts, but a highly cultivated clutch for chocolate caramels.

There is a fortune awaiting the man who invents a boomerang bootjack which you can throw at a cat and have it sail back to the window if it misses its mark.

A Dutchman was about to make a journey to his fatherland, and wishing to say "good bye," to a friend, extended his hand and said, "Vell, of I don'd com back, hullo."

"Look here, you asks me my name, and I tells you Moses Israels; you asks me my address, and I tells you Petticoat lane; you asks me my profession, and I tells you an old-clothes dealer; and now you asks me my religion—why, a Quaker, of course." [Loud laughter in court.]

A preacher in Kentucky, the other Sunday, becoming exasperated, paused in his discourse to say, "Ladies and gentlemen, if you will give me your close attention, I will keep a lookout on that door, and if anything worse than a man enters I will warn you in time to make your escape."

A story is told of two New England deacons between whom a bitter feud had long existed concerning some contested point. Neither would yield, and the matter threatened to be handed down to the next generation, when one day Deacon Smith appeared before his old enemy and solemnly said, "Brother Jones, it is a shame that this quarrel of ours should bring scandal upon the church. I have prayed earnestly for guidance in the matter, and have come to the conclusion that you must give in—for I cannot."

Patrick Malloy, a well-known political aspirant, was found by his friend in a saloon the other day, looking very disconsolate and beery. "Why, Pat, what's the matter? you look as blue as a toad under a harrow." "Faith an' I've good reason to be. We've had twins in the family, and thim twins is born politicians. They are alternates, and work the ward lively. One yells all day, and the other yells all night, and, begorra, between the two I haven't slept a wink for the last tin days."

General News.

HOME.

The late snow-fall in Western New York is said to be the heaviest known for many years. Railroad travel was entirely stopped for awhile. The St. Louis express, which left Buffalo on the 25th inst., was composed of sixteen cars with eight engines, pushing a huge snow plow, and making slow progress.

The New Haven (Conn.) Register has been interviewing leading manufacturers of the place and others, and finds that more men are employed in the city than ever before, that wages are higher than previous to the war, and nearly as high as during flush times, and that there is less suffering and a brighter prospect than is usual at this season of the year.

Preparations for resumption of specie payments have been made by all the city banks of New York, and circulars have been issued to customers and correspondents, giving notice of the changes in accounts to be made on January 2. The New York Clearing House issued a circular on the 27th ult., that, in accordance with a resolution passed by the associated banks at a meeting held November 12, special exchanges of gold checks at the Clearing House would be discontinued after the morning of December 31.

WORK ON THE NORTHERN PACIFIC.—The directors of the Northern Pacific Railroad Company met last week, at the company's offices, in Fifth Ave., N. Y. city, and awarded the contract for building the first 100 miles of the road west of the Missouri river. The company will pay the contractors monthly, in cash, reserving 15 per cent. until the completion of the contract. Cross-ties, railroad iron and fastenings will be furnished by the company, and the 100 miles of road are to be in running order by Nov. 1, 1879.

No attempt will be made at present to bridge the Missouri river at Bismarck, but a good ferry will be established. Beginning at the Heart River Valley, opposite Bismarck, the line as at present surveyed runs nearly west to the Yellowstone at the mouth of Glendive's Creek, which is about thirty miles below the Powder river. The country is a rolling prairie. It is said to be well supplied with good water and grass. The only place where the line is situated upon clay land is in the immediate vicinity of the crossing of the Little Missouri. Along the Heart river waters, the heads of the Knife river, the Little Missouri, and the heads and upper portion of Glendive's Creek, timber is abundant, consisting of oak, ash, elm, cottonwood, etc., and toward the Valley of the Yellowstone, there are large bodies of cedar. Coal is found at the distance of twenty-five miles from the Missouri river, and from that point westward coal veins crop out upon nearly every stream crossed.—N. Y. Tribune.

FOREIGN.

The Afghan war seems to be at an end, and future difficulties are likely to be settled by statesmanship.

All England seems to be in mourning over the death of Princess Alice, daughter of Queen Victoria, which occurred at Darmstadt, on the 14th ult., the seventeenth anniversary of Prince Albert's decease.

The steamer Emily B. Souder, from New York, for San Domingo, foundered in the storm which swept the Atlantic coast on the 10th ult. Thirty-four lives were lost; only two of the passengers and crew are known to have been saved.

The Bishops of the Irish Church do not consider that disestablishment has injured that body. The Bishop of Ossory recently said at a missionary meeting that the Church had done more during the last nine years for the cause of Christian missions at home and abroad than it had ever done before within the memory of man, and this he took to be a proof of real life at the heart.

The Burgomaster of Oberammergau, for fear that the world might regard the theatrical company which proposed to produce the Passion Play in London as having been formed in Oberammergau, writes a card to deny that the inhabitants of that town have anything to do with that company or sanction the sacrifice. The play will next be produced in Oberammergau in 1880, and nowhere else legitimately.

About two years ago Dr. Leonard W. Bacon wrote from Geneva, Switzerland, predicting the failure of the Old Catholic movement in Europe. He now writes a letter to *The Christian Union*, stating that the collapse of the movement is already visible all over Europe, and that "it will be manifest and complete in about twelve months, extraordinary exceptions." He points out that the new government of Geneva begins with a general policy of non-interference in religious matters, and, as the Old Catholic Church in Geneva was created and is upheld by decrees and subsidies from the Hotel de Ville, non-interference is equivalent to annihilation. "The Church consists simply of a clergy, salaried by the State, without congregations. When the salaries stop it is easy to infer where the Church will be." Dr. Bacon recalls that when his prediction of two years ago was published he was charged with "defective opportunities of information," or "invincible ignorance." Considering where he had been and what he had been doing for five years, he felt like replying: "If I don't tell you the truth about this Old Catholic humbug, don't call it defective information. Call it square lying."

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